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CLEANER // IL
TYPESETTER // K
REDRAWER //
QUALITY CHECK //

CHAPTER 24 THE SAD STREET PERFORMER IV
ゴゴゴゴ…
THIS ROOM HAS A TRICK IN IT?
...YEAH.

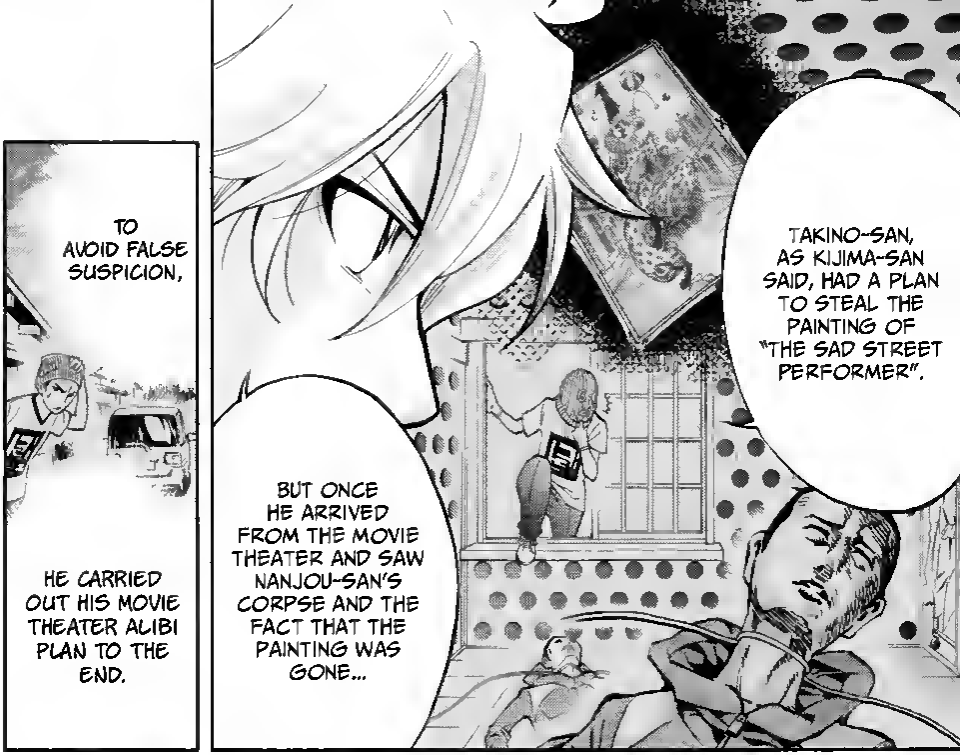
CHAPTER 24

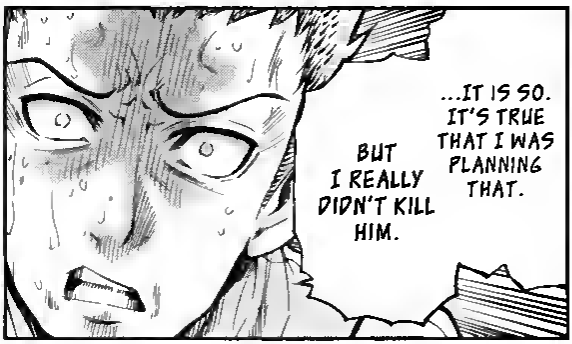
THE SAD STREET PERFORMER IV

WE MIGHT SAY HE WOULD BE THE TRUE PERPETRATOR...
SOMEONE WHO ISN'T SUPPOSED TO BE HERE...
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
.....
EH? SO TAKINO ISN'T THE PERPETRATOR?
!
CONTINUE, KAZAOKA.

I WILL ASK ONCE AGAIN. TAKINO-SAN, YOU SAID "I DIDN'T KILL NANJOU!" JUST NOW, DIDN'T YOU?
IS IT REALLY TRUE?
IT'S TRUE. I DIDN'T KILL HIM!
LO LO
LO
LO LO
PERSPIRATION, BREATHING, MOVEMENT OF PUPILS.. HE IS VERY PERTURBED FROM FEAR, BUT THE PROBABILITY THAT HE IS SPEAKING THE TRUTH IS.. 98.5%.
THERE IS HARDLY ROOM FOR DOUBT.

I'M NOT! I DIDN'T KILL HIM, PLEASE BELIEVE ME!
WAIT WAIT! AFTER HE WENT SO FAR TO MAKE UP AN ALIBI, HOW CAN HE NOT BE THE PERPETRATOR!?
TAKINO-SAN ISN'T LYING.
BUT WHEN I CAME HERE, NANJOU WAS ALREADY DEAD. AND THE PAINTING WAS GONE AS WELL.
—YES FOR SURE, I CAME TO THIS APARTMENT YESTERDAY—
BUT AS KIJIMA-SAN GUESSED, IT'S TRUE YOU CAME TO THIS APARTMENT... ISN'T IT?
YOU DIDN'T KILL HIM...
THE TRUTH IS...
!
ISN'T IT BECAUSE YOU HAD A GUILTY CONSCIENCE!?
IF YOU'RE NOT THE PERPETRATOR, WHY DID YOU MAKE UP THE ALIBI?
THAT'S ...


TAKINO-SAN, AS KIJIMA-SAN SAID, HAD A PLAN TO STEAL THE PAINTING OF "THE SAD STREET PERFORMER".
BUT ONCE HE ARRIVED FROM THE MOVIE THEATER AND SAW NANJOU-SAN'S CORPSE AND THE FACT THAT THE PAINTING WAS GONE...
TO AVOID FALSE SUSPICION,
HE CARRIED OUT HIS MOVIE THEATER ALIBI PLAN TO THE END.


...IT IS SO. IT'S TRUE THAT I WAS PLANNING THAT.
BUT I REALLY DIDN'T KILL HIM.

ISN'T THAT SO, TAKINO-SAN...?

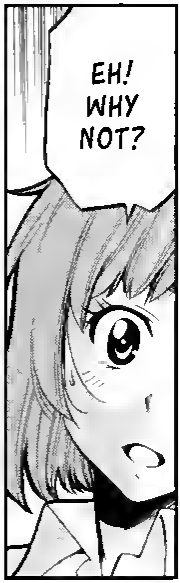
!

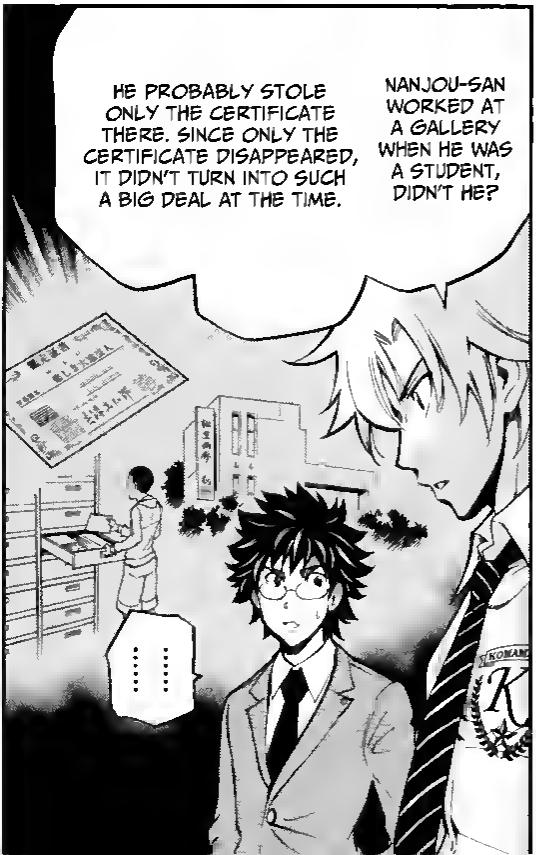
...KINOSHITA, DURING THE FESTIVAL, I SAID THAT A MAN WITH SUNGLASSES WAS WATCHING NANJOU...
DO YOU REMEMBER?
THEN WHO KILLED NANJOU-SAN?
.....
APPARENTLY, OTHER THAN TAKINO-SAN, NANJOU BORROWED MONEY FROM SOME PRETTY DANGEROUS PEOPLE...
WAS IT THEM?
THEN, WHO IS NANJOU-SAN'S KILLER...?
!!
BE IT AS IT MAY, THEY DIDN'T KILL NANJOU-SAN EITHER.
HE WAS PROBABLY THREATENING NANJOU-SAN TO FORCE HIM TO PAY BACK.
IT'S LIKELY THAT HE WAS A DEBT COLLECTOR.
AH, YES.

LET'S SUPPOSE
THE PERSON WHO KILLED NANJOU-SAN IS "X".
SENPAI, YOU SAID BEFORE, "A TRICK TO CREATE A PERSON WHO ISN'T SUPPOSED TO BE HERE".
WHAT DID YOU MEAN BY THAT?
A PER-PETRATOR... WHO DOESN'T EXIST IN THIS WORLD?
I'LL REVEAL WHO THE PERPET-RATOR IS LATER.
BUT THIS "X", WHO KILLED NANJOU-SAN AND STOLE THE PAINTING, DOESN'T EXIST IN THIS WORLD.
EH?

IF NANJOU-SAN WAS IN A DIFFICULT SITUATION DUE HIS DEBTS, THEN HE COULD HAVE MANAGED SOMETHING IF HE SOLD THE PAINTING, COULDN'T HE?
SUZUMORI-SAN,
THAT PAINTING WAS WORTH MORE THAN 30 MILLION YEN, WASN'T IT?
WELL, THAT MIGHT BE TRUE...
Y- YES.
I think it was about that much.
IT'S NOT THAT HE "DIDN'T SELL IT".
IT'S THAT HE "COULDN'T SELL IT."
...WHY DIDN'T HE SELL IT?

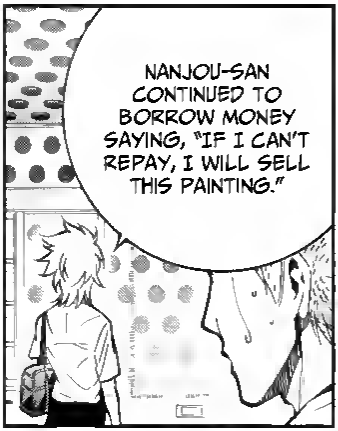
!
HUH?
THE PAINTING WAS A FORGERY!

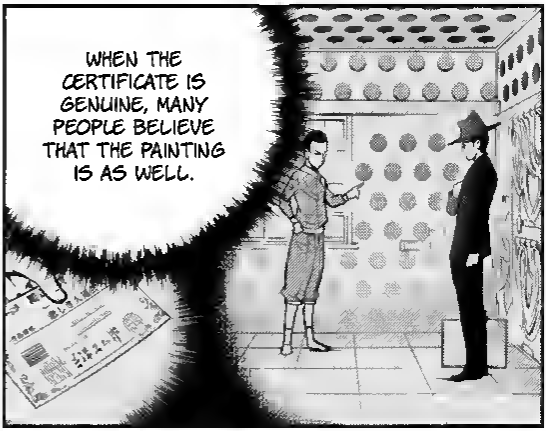

EH! WHY NOT?


HE PROBABLY STOLE ONLY THE CERTIFICATE THERE. SINCE ONLY THE CERTIFICATE DISAPPEARED, IT DIDN'T TURN INTO SUCH A BIG DEAL AT THE TIME.
NANJOU-SAN WORKED AT A GALLERY WHEN HE WAS A STUDENT, DIDN'T HE?
.....

BUT WE'VE CONFIRMED THE CERTIFICATE SAYS IT'S GENUINE!?

AND THEN HE GAINED EVERYONE'S TRUST BY SHOWING THAT PAINTING TOGETHER WITH THE CERTIFICATE.
NANJOU-SAN BOUGHT A REPLICA OF "THE SAD STREET PERFORMER" THAT WAS WORTH ONLY A FEW THOUSAND YEN.
ONCE THE EXCITEMENT DIED DOWN,


NANJOU-SAN CONTINUED TO BORROW MONEY SAYING, "IF I CAN'T REPAY, I WILL SELL THIS PAINTING."


WHEN THE CERTIFICATE IS GENUINE, MANY PEOPLE BELIEVE THAT THE PAINTING IS AS WELL.

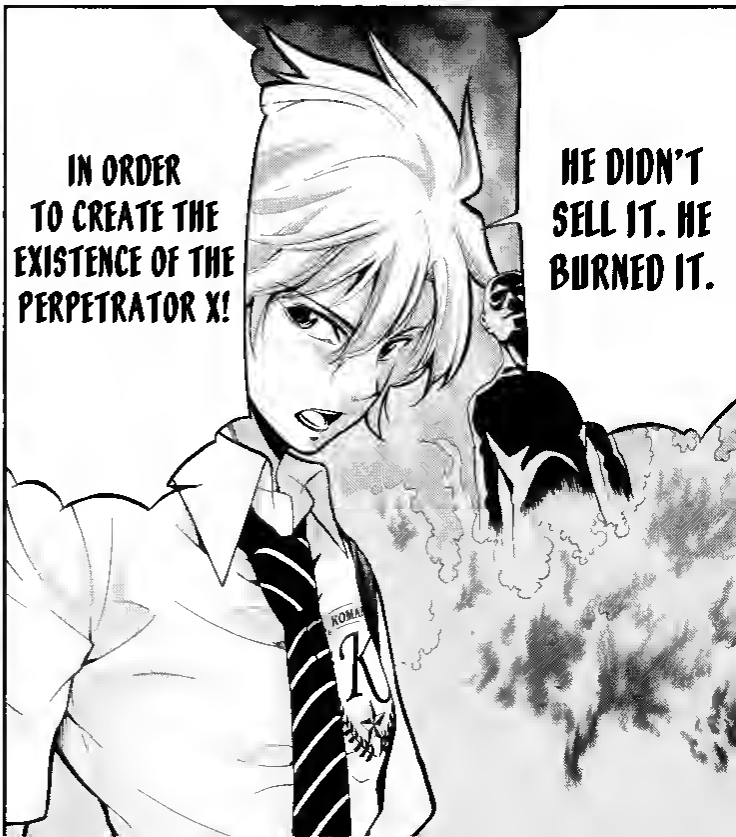
LENT HIM MONEY AFTER BEING TAKEN IN BY THAT...
IT'S TRUE. I TOO...

NANJOU-SAN HIMSELF HAD ALREADY DISPOSED OF THE PAINTING.

X
THE PAINTING IS A FORGERY.
AND THE "X" THAT KILLED NANJOU-SAN DOESN'T EXIST IN THIS WORLD...
JUST WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
fake

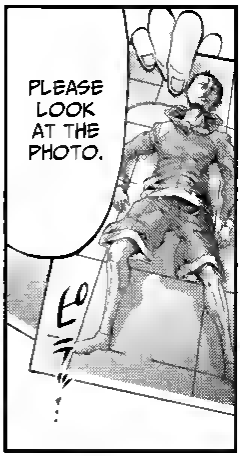
EH!?
BUT HE COULDN'T SELL IT SINCE IT WAS A FORGERY...

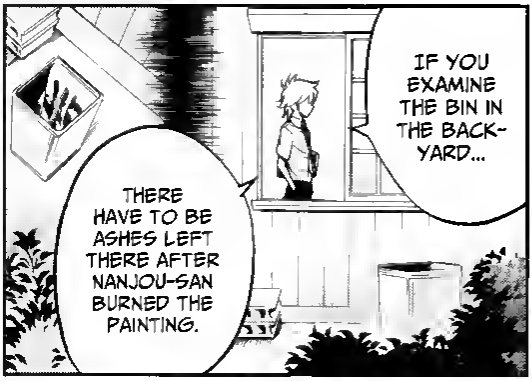
!!!


IN ORDER TO CREATE THE EXISTENCE OF THE PERPETRATOR X!
HE DIDN'T SELL IT. HE BURNED IT.

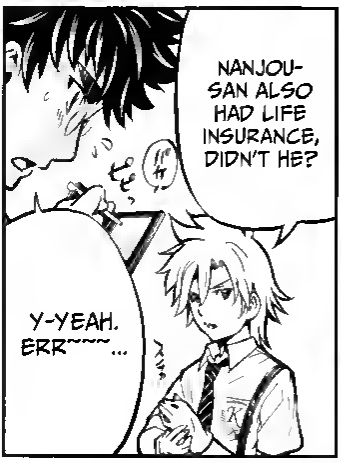
WHAT DO YOU THINK IT IS?
Hmm ?
IT'S SOME-THING LIKE DUST THERE.

THERE'S SOMETHING STICKING TO HIS FINGER-TIPS...


PLEASE LOOK AT THE PHOTO.


IF YOU EXAMINE THE BIN IN THE BACK-YARD...
THERE HAVE TO BE ASHES LEFT THERE AFTER NANJOU-SAN BURNED THE PAINTING.

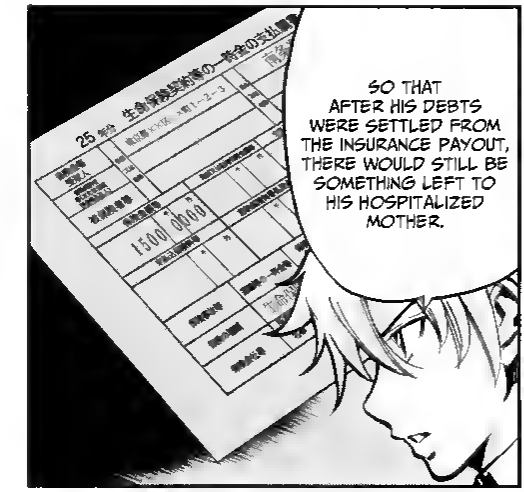
IT'S THE ASHES FROM BURNING "THE SAD STREET PERFORMER".
!

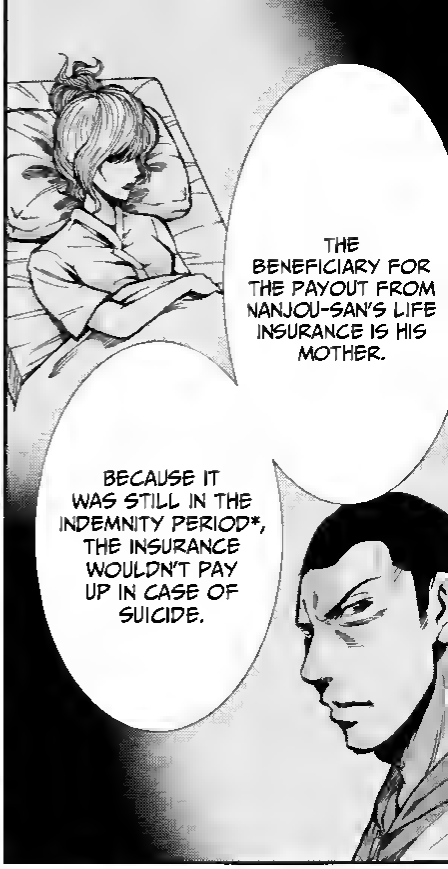

NANJOU-SAN ALSO HAD LIFE INSURANCE, DIDN'T HE?
Y-YEAH. ERR~~~...

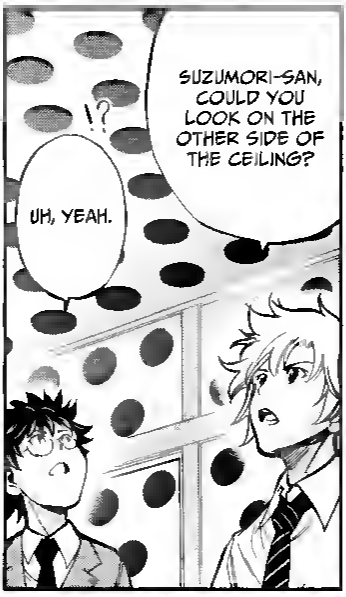
.....

THE BENEFICIARY IS HIS MOTHER. HIS MOTHER HAS BEEN HOSPITALIZED FOR THE PAST FEW YEARS.
NANJOU-SAN COULD NOT BORROW ANY MONEY, AND HAD NO WAY OF REPAYING HIS PAST DEBTS.
THAT'S WHEN HE CAME UP WITH A CERTAIN IDEA.
THAT IDEA WAS A TRICK USING HIS FAVORITE CIRCULAR JUMP ROPE...
AS WELL AS
THE POLKA DOT PANELS THAT COVER THIS WHOLE ROOM.

NANJOU-SAN HIMSELF!
KAZA-OKA!?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN
PER-PETRATOR "X" WHO
HAS KILLED NANJOU-SAN IS...
!
YES, THIS CASE WAS NANJOU-SAN'S SUICIDE THAT WAS CLEVERLY SET UP TO LOOK LIKE BURGLARY AND HOMICIDE.
EH!
SO YOU MEAN IT WAS A SUICIDE ...!?

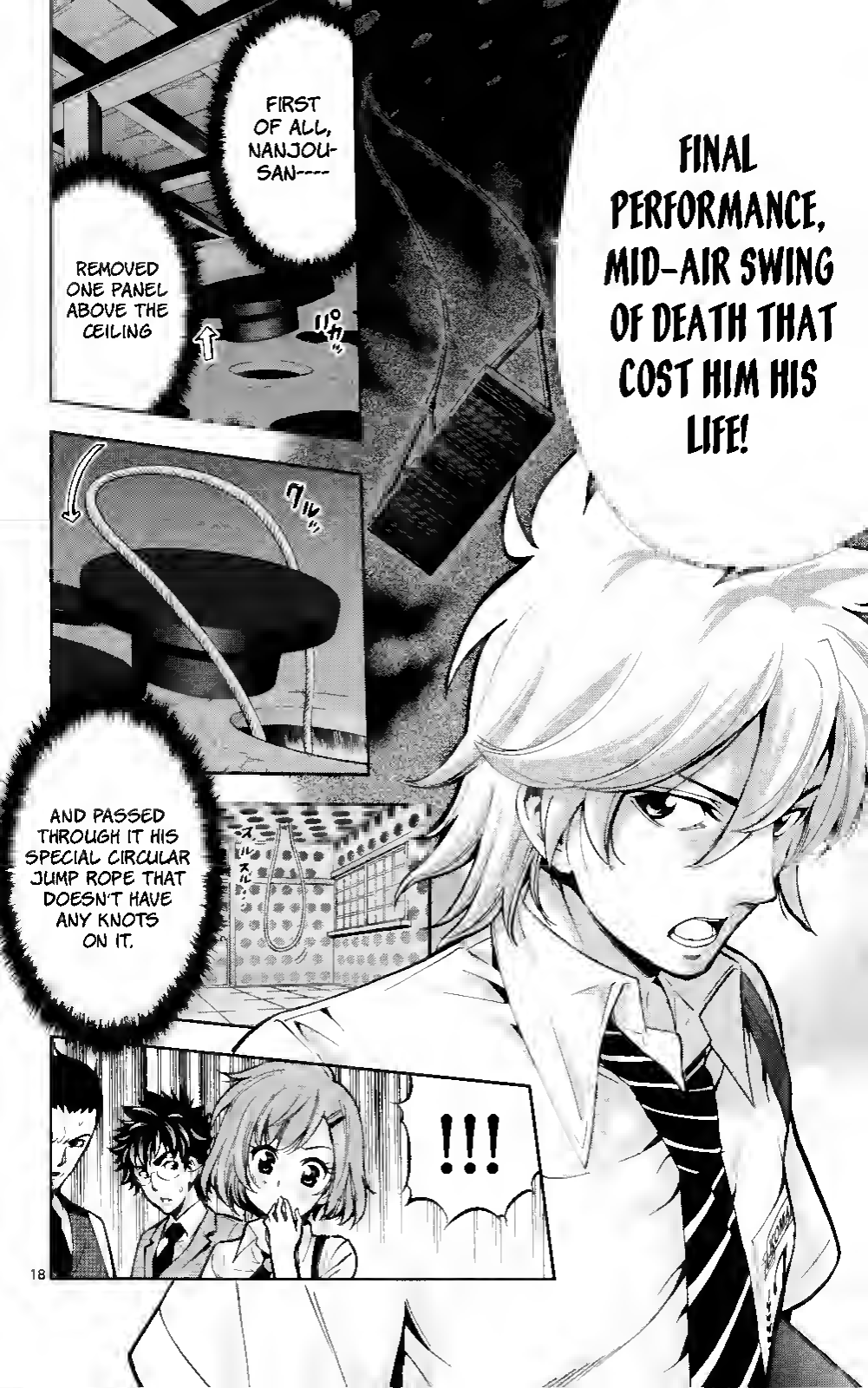

SO THAT AFTER HIS DEBTS WERE SETTLED FROM THE INSURANCE PAYOUT, THERE WOULD STILL BE SOMETHING LEFT TO HIS HOSPITALIZED MOTHER.


THE BENEFICIARY FOR THE PAYOUT FROM NANJOU-SAN'S LIFE INSURANCE IS HIS MOTHER.
BECAUSE IT WAS STILL IN THE INDEMNITY PERIOD*, THE INSURANCE WOULDN'T PAY UP IN CASE OF SUICIDE.



*THE PERIOD WHEN INSURANCE WON'T PAY DEPENDING ON CIRCUMSTANCES IT'S SET UP TO PREVENT SIGNING OF CONTRACTS ONLY TO GET THE PAYOUT AT ONCE

THE AXE THAT A JUGGLER WAS THROWING DURING THE STREET PERFORMANCE FESTIVAL!
AH!
cough cough
THIS IS WHAT WAS THERE.
4
THAT WAS THE STREET PERFORMER NANJOU-SAN'S----
AND HIS OWN JUMP ROPE, AS WELL AS THE POLKA DOT PANELS.
HE PROBABLY GOT IT FROM A FELLOW STREET PERFORMER.
NANJOU-SAN SET UP THE TRICK USING THIS AXE


FIRST OF ALL, NANJOU-SAN----
REMOVED ONE PANEL ABOVE THE CEILING
ピカッ
グルッ
AND PASSED THROUGH IT HIS SPECIAL CIRCULAR JUMP ROPE THAT DOESN'T HAVE ANY KNOTS ON IT.
スルスル…
!!!
FINAL PERFORMANCE, MID-AIR SWING OF DEATH THAT COST HIM HIS LIFE!

NANJOU-SAN RETURNED TO HIS APARTMENT AND WRAPPED THE JUMP ROPE AROUND HIS NECK.
THEN HE CLIMBED ON THE EDGE OF THAT WINDOW.
UTILIZING HIS JUMPING POWER AND AGILITY, NANJOU-SAN
SQUATTED SO THAT HIS FEET DIDN'T TOUCH THE FLOOR AND LEAPT!
THEN HE SUSPENDED THE JUMP ROPE FROM ABOVE THE CEILING SO IT CATCHES AROUND THE BLADE OF THE AXE,
ABOVE THE CEILING
AND COVERED IT WITH A BLACK POLKA DOT PANEL.

BEFORE LONG, NANJOU-SAN PASSED AWAY WHILE SWINGING LIKE A PENDULUM.
DUE TO HIS WEIGHT AND THE VIBRATIONS FROM HIS SWINGING THAT CONTINUED FOR A WHILE,
THE AXE'S BLADE CUT THROUGH THE JUMP ROPE
THE ROPE NANJOU-SAN HAD BEEN SUSPENDED ON WAS CUT AND FELL.
AND LOOKING FROM INSIDE THE ROOM, THE POLKA DOT PANEL APPEARS TO BE NORMAL.
AS IF HE HAD BEEN STRANGLED TO DEATH WITH A ROPE BY SOMEONE!
NANJOU-SAN FELL TO THE FLOOR

SO THAT'S WHY THERE WEREN'T ANY SIGNS OF STRUGGLE EITHER...
YOU WOULD FIND OUT THAT IT HAD BEEN CUT WITH AN AXE. AND THE AXE HAS TO REMAIN ON A CEILING PANEL..
SHOULD YOU COMPARE THE FIBERS ON BOTH ENDS OF THE ROPE,
YOU COULDN'T DO THIS TRICK WITH A REGULAR ROPE. WHEN IT GOT CUT, A KNOT WOULD REMAIN, WHICH WOULD LOOK UNNATURAL.
knot
I'LL BE A SPORT AND ADMIT IT.
...IT WAS MY LOSS TODAY.
AS EXPECTED OF YOU, KAZAOKA-KUN.
NO, I WAS ABLE TO SOLVE THIS ONLY DUE TO YOUR PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION.

YAY~~! SENPAI, YOU WON AGAINST KIJIMA-SAN!
EH?
IT'S NOT ABOUT WINNING OR LOSING. KIJIMA-SAN AND I AREN'T RIVALS OR ANYTHING.
WE'RE COMRADES WHO HAVE SOLVED ONE CASE TOGETHER...

超推脳KEI

準行不思議事件ファイル

超推脳
KEI
摩訶不思議事件ファイル